

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
VOLUNTARY STATEMENT
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EVENT#: 171001-3519

SPECIFIC CRIME: ACTIVE SHOOTER / MURDER

DATE OCCURRED: 10-01-17

TIME OCCURRED: 2208 HOURS

LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE: MANDALAY BAY RESORT AND CASINO
3950 S. LAS VEGAS BOULEVARD
LAS VEGAS, NV 89119

CITY OF LAS VEGAS

CLARK COUNTY

NAME OF PERSON GIVING STATEMENT: OFFICER BLAKE WALFORD (BW), P# 15033

DOB:

SOCIAL SECURITY #:

RACE:

SEX:

HEIGHT:

WEIGHT:

HAIR:

EYES:

HOME ADDRESS:

PHONE 1:

WORK ADDRESS:

PHONE 2:

The following is the transcription of a tape-recorded interview conducted by DETECTIVE K. PLOENSE (KP), P# 6269, LVMPD FORCE INVESTIGATION TEAM, on 10-03-17 at 1857 hours. Also present are Detective M. Scilimenti (MS), P# 6239, and Las Vegas Police Protective Association representative T. Todd (TT), P# 8411.

KP: Operator, this is Detective K. Ploense with the Force Investigation Team conducting a recorded statement with first name Blake - B-L-A-K-E, last name is Wal- Walford - W-A-L-F-O-R-D, P# 15033. His call sign is, uh, George Charlie 64, uh, date of hire is [REDACTED] His area command is Gang Vice Bureau, uh, his squad is GC60. His days off are Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. His hours are 1500 to 0100. His vehicle number at - at the time of incident is 9645. This interview is in reference to an officer-involved shooting that occurred on 10-1-2017 at 2208 hours in the area of or at the

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location of 3950 South Las Vegas Boulevard, Las Vegas, Nevada which is the Mandalay Bay Hotel Casino. Today's date is 10-3-17 and the time is 1857 hours. This statement is being conducted at 400 South MLK, Las Vegas, Nevada 89106 on the third floor which is the Metro Headquarters building. Also present is Michael Scilimenti, P# 6239 and his PA- PPA Representative Tyler Todd, P# 8411. Um, Officer Walford, are you aware that this is being recorded?

BW: Yes.

KP: Okay. Before we get started, um, on the night of the incident, uh, can you tell me, uh, what uniform you were wearing and describe it for me.

BW: I was wearin' a long-sleeved black polo with the, uh, Metro insignia, uh, like - like a knit pattern and underneath it it said Gang Unit. I was wearing, uh, blue jeans and tennis shoes. I had a duty belt, uh, my normal duty belt I use for patrol. I had a tac vest with (unintelligible) plates in 'em and then I had my, uh, Colt AR-15.

KP: Okay. On your duty belt wh- what did you have on the duty belt?

BW: Uh, I had my handcuffs, pepper spray, my duty firearm, another pair of handcuffs, baton, taser, flashlight, radio and magazines.

KP: And on that day because you're operating in a detective capacity you did not have a bad- body-worn camera, correct?

BW: That's correct. I was doin', like, a two-week ride along, like, a TDY with our inves-gang investigators.

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KP: Okay.

BW: So I was with them.

KP: Okay. Um, so your primary weapon is a 6 R?

BW: Yeah, 6 R 226.

KP: Okay. Um, that is a ni- and then you also had a Colt AR-15?

BW: Mm-hm.

KP: And that's M-4?

BW: Yeah.

KP: Okay. Your firearm is a 9-millimeter - your handgun?

BW: Yes.

KP: And your rifle is a 223?

BW: Yes.

KP: Okay. And although you don't have the serial number now but those are both weapons you regularly qual with quarterly?

BW: Just qualled with 'em last quarter.

KP: Okay. Awesome. Okay. So starting, uh, from when you first heard the call come out, where you were. If you could just go ahead...

BW: Yeah.

KP: ...and take it from there.

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BW: I was on the third floor of, uh, in the gangs, uh, office with the detectives. Uh, Sergeant Stobol said that there was shots fired, uh, coming over as Convention Center on the radio. We all listened for the radio to ma-, you know, to make sure that, like, it was a legit call. Uh, multiple people were call-ins and they were hearin' the gunfire. So he told us to go downstairs get, uh, suited up and that we were gonna head towards the Mandalay Bay and he would try to, uh, relay where he wanted to meet up. So I went downstairs. Went to the locker room, grabbed my patrol, uh, duty belt. I grabbed my radio and my flashlight and I ran outside into the parking garage where I met up with Matt. He was already in his, uh, pickup truck. I jumped in his pickup truck and told him that I needed to go get my, uh, rifle, uh, plate carrier, my tac vest and my rifle out of, uh, my black and white. I was upstairs. So we drove up to the third floor, grabbed my - grabbed my stuff. I threw on my tac vest real quick and, uh, we jumped on the 15 and I thi- I think Charleston. They were givin' updates about what was goin' on. Don't come from the north. Don't come from the east. So we got off at Russell and, uh, Las Vegas Boulevard, or Russell and 15 and we parked our car, um, at Russell in the boulevard, like, almost, like, in the middle of the intersection. Uh, when we got out, uh, we were greeted by a bunch of officers that were saying that we were gonna inside the Mandalay Bay. So we ran from the boulevard on Russell to the entrance point of, I guess, where the convention center part of Mandalay Bay is. They have, like, their own entrance. Um, so we were goin' up there and there was a sergeant there that was tellin' us, like, come on we gotta take it kinda slow but, I mean, over the radio we were hearin' all the

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casualties and people gettin' hit so it's like, no, it's an active shooter. We need to go now. We need to go. So me and Matt took - went inside and we just started running through the casino tryin' to get to the lobby. Um, we were tellin' everyone to get outta the building. Of course they were kinda standin' around. I don't really think they even knew what was goin' on. Uh, made it to the lobby of the elevators. And I don't know what tower or anything like that but we were - we got into the lobby where the elevators were. And they had shut down all the elevators so we were, um, tryin' to get access to an elevator that actually worked. So while we're waiting for an elevator to get worked, um, there was a - a SWAT guy -- Levi - I don't know what his last name is -- he was all suited up in his SWAT gear and he saw me, Matt and I think, like, two others. Tellin' us that we were gonna go up to the 32nd floor and we were gonna try to, like, go into this guy's room. We just had intel that he had shot at a security guard through the door so we knew what floor he was on and what room number he was in and then that there was officers pinned down and we needed to go give them relief so they can get them outta there. Uh, we got into an elevator a door that finally opened but none of the buttons would work so we were waiting, um, like five, ten minutes for a guy to find a key that could actually, uh, unlock the elevators to go. We went up to the 32nd floor, uh, got out. Looked down the hallway and we could see that there was an officer, like, proned out, like, on his stomach facing the suspect's door at the end of the hallway. Uh, we were yellin' at him, like, hey you need to come down, get outta the hallway. But I don't know if either he couldn't hear us or listen or anything like that. Um, so I do remember Sergeant Matchko had us

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army-crawl all the way down to try to get that guy out. We got him outta the hallway. Um, Levi went down there and kinda, like, I dunno, like, surveyed kinda what was goin' on down there. He said that there was a stairwell just outside of where the guy's double-doors were to get into his room and that he wanted to get to that stairwell. So we went - we found a security guard. He took us down to the 31st floor. We got into the stairwell and we went around the building to get into that stairwell. Got in there, um, got up into the 32nd floor and we were gonna do, like, kinda, like, a quick peek of the door. Like, so we're in the stairwell and there's, uh, two sets of doors before you actually get into the hallway. So we got into the one. It was kind of a cramped area. And so we took out the lights in the stairwell 'cause he said he wanted it dark so we ripped off the lights and all that good stuff. And he said he wanted me to open the door. Just do, like, a quick peek so he can kinda survey if there's any type of movement or anything at the door. But the door was, uh, bolted shut. We couldn't pull the door open. So Levi gave me his breach tool. We pried the door open. You could see that it was screwed shut. Um, and I believe Bitsko from canine and there was another canine guy with a shield there kinda set up cover, uh, with the shield to keep the door propped open. Uh, Levi was thinkin' about, like, how are we gonna get to this room. Um, and all this is, like, still with everyone sayin' what's goin' on outside. And Levi decided that he was gonna use his, uh, breach charges that he had on him to blow the - the double set of doors to see if we can't get a reaction if he's actually still inside there. 'Cause we hadn't heard any type of shooting while we were on the 32nd floor. Um, so Levi said that he was gonna put a

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breach on the - the double set of doors. So he handed me the detonator, uh, so I could make sure the slack of the cord, uh, wasn't gonna get caught up in anyone's feet. Uh, they used the shield, um, as cover while Levi was out there so we covered down on the door with our rifles. We put the deck cord up, went around the corner. He breached it. You know, we told everyone that or he called Lieutenant Hudler before he breached to let him know that we were gonna use the explosives - let everyone know that we were gonna do it. Um, we breached it and the doors kinda, like, they came off the hinges but they kinda folded inwards to where you couldn't see directly through the middle but you could see through the top and the - the bottom and the top of the doors. And so we cleared the bottom and the top and that's when we could see all the rifles that - we couldn't see the - the suspect yet but we could see rifles all around the floor. Um, so at that point we - we waited probably, like, five to ten seconds to see if he's got any reaction from the round. We didn't, uh, so Levi was sayin' we need to make entry now 'cause we don't know what the guy's doin'. If he's havin' problems reloading, if he's settin' up to get a tactical advantage on us. He's like, we need to go in now. So I remember it was Levi - I think Levi was in first. I was either second or third in that stack. We busted the doors. Some people went left. I went right. We could see the suspect that was on his back, uh, with rifles all the way around him. You could tell there was a gunshot wound to his, like, the front part of his face. Um, I've - I'm pretty sure it was, I mean, I don't - I don't know exactly but when I looked at him I was pretty sure that the gunshot wound was, like, it almost looked like he got shot, like, through the front of his forehead. And so

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my thought process was that there was someone had shot him and there's someone else inside the room. And so we cleared that room and there - it was a two-bedroom suite. Um, we could see that the whole front window was shattered from floor to ceiling that he was in. And I do remember over the radio that they said there was two windows that were completely fully shattered so I know there was - there was another room that - that he was shooting out of or someone was shooting out of. So we stacked up in the hallway. There was, like, a little bathroom area. There was another patrol guy in there. I don't know. I don't remember what his name is but, uh, we got into that bathroom and Levi says that we - Levi tried kickin' the door four or five times to get into that room. I kicked it a couple times and Levi decided he was gonna use another breach charge on it. He left the charge in the stairwell case so I think he sent someone to go get that other charge. We put that charge up. We went inside the bathroom, um, let everyone know we were doing another charge. We blew that door off, um, we didn't wait for a reaction after that one. We were going in there pretty much, like, when the door was still flying forward, uh, so we're pushing down the door. Uh, I think Levi was in first. At that point another SWAT guy was coming in from the rear - from behind us. I think it was, like, Levi, me - there was another - I think. I'm pretty sure there was another SWAT guy coming in from my left and we entered the room, uh, and that's when I heard, like, I don't know, like, two or three rounds go off. Um, I mean, there was smoke all over from the - the breach, um, and we - we could see that there was, uh, more rifles on the ground and on the - I think there was a rifle on the bed. And that's when we could see that there was another,

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um, window that was completely blown out. Um, and so when we didn't see anyone in there I was almost, like, did someone jump out of the room or somethin' like that. I couldn't tell. So we cleared the room, uh, then we went back to the first original room to kinda recheck to make sure we didn't miss anything. And then, uh, SWAT was kinda just takin' over and sayin' that we need to get everyone outside the room to preserve what we had there. And then, uh, that's when me and Matt, uh, were in the hallway for a little bit and then we went downstairs - down to the lobby and we got a new assignment of what we were gonna do for the rest of the night. That was it.

KP: Okay. Just a couple questions for ya.

BW: Okay.

KP: Uh, you - you referred to Matt. Who is Matt?

BW: Matt Donaldson. He was the, uh, the guy that I was with in his, uh, duty truck, uh, Detective Donaldson.

KP: And when you arrived at Mandalay Bay did you hear shooting then?

BW: Uh, I can't remember. I - I don't recall. I don't - I don't remember.

KP: And, um, do you remember everybody who stacked up with you and went in? Can you remember any - any names?

BW: I know Bitsko from canine was there, uh, Levi 'cause I just know Levi was in front of me the whole time. There was another canine. I think - I think he was canine or he

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mighta been SWAT. He was, like, in a full gear. He's the guy that had the, uh, the shield. And then I know Matt. I'm - I'm fairly new to the department so I don't.

KP: And, uh, just another question. That second door that had to be breached.

BW: Mm-hm.

KP: It's not an issue or nothin' but did - I'm just wonderin'. You guys said you were kickin' it. Did you try to open it? Was it, like, dead-bolted or somethin' or?

BW: So it's, like, one of those - it's, like, a conjoining room doors.

KP: Mm-hm.

BW: To where, like, there's two doors. That first set of doors had a door handle that was already open. So it was like if someone was - there was no door handle on the inside of that second door.

KP: Oh.

BW: You know what I mean? - So it's like if you rented out a two-bedroom or I don't know if you've been in conjoining hotel rooms where they have that conjoining door. There's usually two doors so you can decide if you wanna, like, have that door open. So there's no door handles on the inside where the doors shut.

KP: So was it - on this one was there two doors there?

BW: I'm pretty sure there was two doors.

KP: So the one...

BW: 'Cause where we were kicking was flat, like, where the door handle would be.

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KP: Okay. So the one for the suite musta - was probably open but the one for the - the other door.

BW: And that's what - that's what I was - that's what our concern was. We couldn't get in there. And I was like, well how the hell is there no one inside this room when the door was locked from the other side? And so that's when we were like we were gonna use the breach and I was kind of under the assumption that we were gonna take immediate fire when we got to that door. Because...

KP: Okay.

BW: We knew there was another set of doors or another set of windows that were blown out. And like I said when we - when I first looked at that body I was under the assumption - I didn't see a handgun and I knew that was a handgun round that shot him in the face 'cause rifles do a lot more damage. I was like, someone just killed him and is possibly in that room.

KP: Okay.

BW: But then Levi was saying maybe the charge locked that door au- automatically with the pressures of the round so.

KP: And - and you, uh, when you were up there you heard on the radio that there was actually two windows that were blown out? Somebody said that on the radio you said?

BW: Yeah. Yeah, I believe someone either someone said on the radio or we were hearing it while we were running downstairs that there was two windows that were

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blown out. I don't know if it was security that was givin' us the details. 'Cause we were workin' with security tryin' to get up into the elevators. And so I can't remember if it was over the radio or them saying...

KP: Okay. You just prepared, like...

BW: I just remember someone saying that there's two windows...

KP: Okay - okay.

BW: That were bein' 'cause we didn't actually see the front part of Mandalay Bay at all.

KP: Uh, Detective Scilimenti?

MS: Just a couple questions. Um, you said you heard gunshots. Do you know who - who fired their weapon inside the...

BW: No.

MS: Room?

BW: I just know it was whoever was to my left.

MS: Did you discharge your weapon at all?

BW: No.

MS: So you thought there was an additional shooter. I'm sorry. That's what you meant?

BW: Yeah.

MS: Okay.

KP: Do you have anything?

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TT: Transcriber, uh, Tyler Todd. Just, um, some other questions. So we - we know you didn't fire your weapon but, um, when you guys first make entry into the suite, um, and you see the suspect laying on the ground at - at that point did you hear any gunshots?

BW: No.

TT: Okay. It wasn't until after you guys already made entry, saw the suspect was dead and were making entry into a second room or suite whatever that's when you heard the fire?

BW: It was after the breach and I was going into that second room was when the shots were fired.

TT: And after already seeing the suspect...

BW: Yeah.

TT: Apparently dead on the ground?

BW: Mm-hm.

TT: Okay.

KP: Uh, Operator this is the, uh, end of interview. Time is 1912. Same people present and, uh, thank you.

THIS VOLUNTARY STATEMENT WAS COMPLETED AT LVMPD HEADQUARTERS, 400 S. MARTIN LUTHER KING BOULEVARD, LAS VEGAS, NV 89106, ON THE 3RD DAY OF OCTOBER 2017 AT 1912 HOURS.

KP: MS: (NET TRANSCRIPTS)

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